

Engineers of the future impress the professionals at virtual work experience week

The aim of the week was to provide young people aged 14-18 insights into construction and engineering within the highways sector, through a blended mix of learning that would encourage them to consider a future in the industry. The recent pilot featured 21 students from across England and 12 of the group's 17 member companies as well as Traffic for Greater Manchester.

Throughout the week the students met a series of experts, covering insights such as engineering, social value, quality, design, and how to win contracts.

Every afternoon they met with their assigned mentors who supported the students as they formed their own construction companies, and used what they had learned, along with their own research, to put together a tender presentation, based on a potential road project to a panel of industry experts.

Based on the knowledge survey results from the week, 100% of the students agreed that they see themselves working in the industry in the future, understood a variety of careers they could pursue and how the different professions worked with each other to deliver a project.

Poppy, a student on the work experience from Lord Lawson of Beamish High School in Gateshead, said:

I had a fantastic week and am so glad that I took this opportunity. I was the only student from my school to join the event and in doing so it has opened many doors for my final year in high school as well as helped me to understand where my future career lies. Thank-you to Highways England and all of the companies I met.

Highways England Education Group Lead Kevin Hutchinson, Social Value Manager at Warrington-based John Sisk and Son, said:

Every student was a willing participant, asking and answering questions as well as providing informative feedback and insights. I was amazed by the level of understanding they demonstrated. We threw a lot of information at them but they absorbed and presented it back to our judges like seasoned professionals.

I am also proud of the collaborative approach demonstrated across our Education Group to pull together and deliver this week.

Events like this help to attract the next generation of talent to

our industry and I can see fantastic opportunities for future collaboration across Highways England, their supply chain and the rest of industry through this group.

The Highways England Education Group currently consists of the following construction companies and designers and is always looking to welcome new members from the industry: AECOM, Amey, Balfour Beatty, BAM Nuttall, Connect Plus M25, Costain, Graham Construction, Highways England, John Sisk and Son, Kier Construction, Morgan Sindall, Morrison Construction, Mott Macdonald, NMCN Construction, Osbourne Construction, Skanska, Volker Fitzpatrick and WSP.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.